

## How can I learn more about smallpox?

You can call the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's **Public Health Hot-Topics** line at **1-866-866-2769**.

You can also find information on these web sites:

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

[www.dhmh.state.md.us](http://www.dhmh.state.md.us)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov.smallpox](http://www.cdc.gov.smallpox)



### Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., *Governor*

Michael S. Steele, *Lt. Governor*

Nelson J. Sabatini, *Secretary*

The services and facilities of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) are operated on a non-discriminatory basis. This policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, or national origin and applies to the provisions of employment and granting of advantages, privileges and accommodations.

The Department, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, ensures that qualified individuals with disabilities are given an opportunity to participate in and benefit from DHMH services, programs, benefits, and employment opportunities.

*What Smallpox? - English - A*

# What is Smallpox?



## What is smallpox?

Smallpox has been around for thousands of years. In 1949, the United States had its last known case of the disease. The last natural case in the world was in 1977.

Smallpox can be a deadly disease. About one out of every three people who get sick from the disease will die. Smallpox is a virus that is spread from person to person.

## How is smallpox spread?

- The virus can be carried through the air when a person coughs or sneezes.
- Clothes, blankets and other items that have touched a sick person can carry the disease.
- Sometimes smallpox can spread in enclosed places like buildings, buses and trains.
- Exchange of body fluids can spread the virus.

## What are the signs of smallpox?

- In the beginning, smallpox can seem like the flu.
- The signs can include:
  - A sudden feeling of being tired or weak.
  - A fever of 101 degrees or higher
  - Headache, back pain, vomiting and sometimes stomach pain
  - A rash that appears on the face, arms or legs two to four days after the first signs. Later the rash will move to the chest or stomach area.

## Can animals or insects carry the disease?

No.